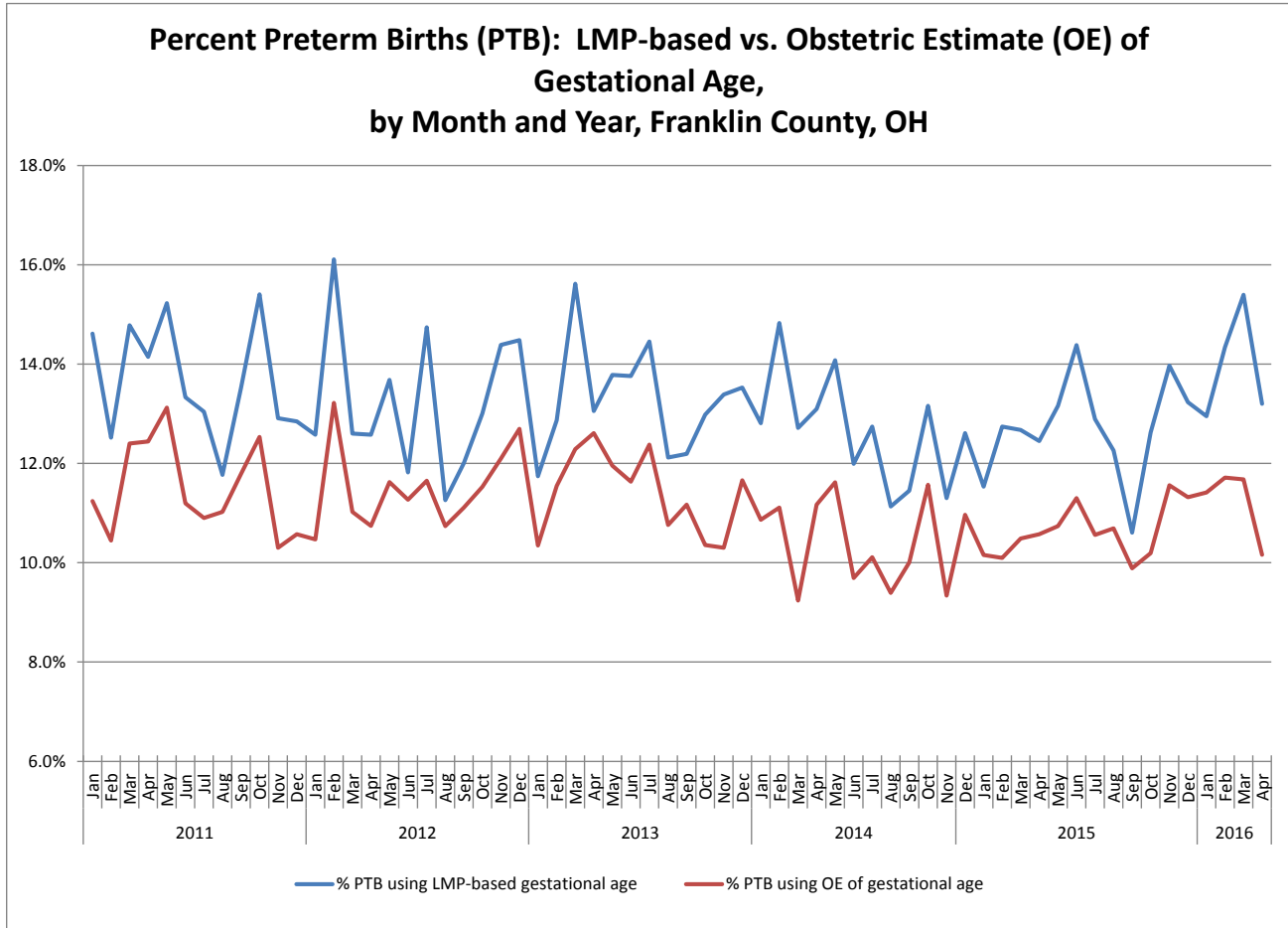


Notice of Change to the Preterm Birth Rate:

It has come to our attention that The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and the State of Ohio have transitioned to a new standard for estimating the gestational age of a newborn. The new measure, the obstetric estimate of gestation at delivery (OE) is replacing the measure based on the date of the last normal menses (LMP) because of increasing evidence of the greater validity of the OE compared with the LMP-based measure¹.

To be consistent with NCHS and State of Ohio, Columbus Public Health will be transitioning from the LMP based estimate of gestational age to the OE in historical, current, and future birth data analysis effective June, 2016 starting with the publication of the April 2016 data report. In general, the findings from NCHS show switching to the OE results in a lower preterm birth rate. A review of monthly Franklin County, OH resident birth data from 2011 through April 2016 shows an average of about two percentage points lower monthly preterm birth rate when using the new standard.



¹Martin JA, Osterman MJK, Kirmeyer SE, Gregory ECW. Measuring gestational age in vital statistics data: Transitioning to the obstetric estimate. National vital statistics reports; vol 64 no 5. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2015.